

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COPENH 00007 01 OF 02 021801Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

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USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COPENHAGEN 0007

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, DA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER TO ISRAEL

REF: A. COPENHAGEN 3569 (NOTAL); B. TEL AVIV 7378 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. PRIMIN RABIN TOLD DANISH FONMIN GULDBERG THAT
THE MIDDLE EAST QUESTION HAD TO BE SEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE
EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION AND THAT THE USSR IS NOT REALY
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PAGE 02 COPENH 00007 01 OF 02 021801Z

INTERESTED IN DETENTE. FONMIN ALLON, WHILE NOTING ISRAEL'S

INCREASED MILITARY STRENGTH, EMPHASIZED THE DESIRE FOR A DIPLOMATIC SETTLEMENT AND NOTED THE ISRAELI SUPPORT FOR THE SECRETARY'S EFFORTS, WHICH GULDBERG SECONDED. THE PLO COULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BECAUSE IT DID NOT RECOGNIZE ISRAEL. JERUSALEM COULD NOT BE DIVIDED, BUT MUST REMAIN UNDER ISRAELI CONTROL. THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE COULD BE DANGEROUS FOR EUROPE BECAUSE THE ARABS WERE USING IT TO ATTAIN POLITICAL ENDS. END SUMMARY.

1. HAAKONSEN, WHO HAS RECENTLY TAKEN OVER MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICAN AFFAIRS AT THE MFA AND WHO ACCOMPANIED FONMIN GULDBERG ON HIS VISIT TO ISRAEL DECEMBER 15-19, GAVE CHARGE JAN. 2 THE FOLLOWING RUNDOWN OF THE VISIT (ALONG WITH EVERYONE ELSE AT THE MINISTRY, HAAKONSEN HAD BEEN ON CHRISTMAS VACATION UNTIL THAT DATE). HAAKONSEN SAID THAT GULDBERG HAD HAD LENGTHY DISCUSSION WITH FONMIN ALLON AND ALSO A GOOD EXCHANGE WITH PRIMIN RABIN. BOTH HAD BEEN VERY OPEN IN EXPRESSING THEIR VIEWS. THEY SEEMED TO WANT TO LAY OUT THEIR CASE IN DETAIL TO A FRIENDLY EUROPEAN INTERLOCUTOR, ALTHOUGH ALLON WOULD NOT REVEAL, EITHER TO GULDBERG OR TO THE PRESS, THE RESULTS OF HIS JUST CONCLUDED DISCUSSIONS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN WASHINGTON. RABIN SAID THAT THE MIDDLE EAST QUESTION SHOULD BE SEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION. HE MAINTAINED THAT THE USSR DOES NOT REALLY WANT A DETENTE BECAUSE, AS HE PUT IT, CONTINUING TENSION WILL EVENTUALLY CAUSE THE COLLAPSE OF WESTERN INSTITUTIONS AND THUS SERVE THE SOVIET CAUSE BETTER THAN WOULD DETENTE. AS A CONSEQUENCE, RABIN THOUGHT THAT THE SOVIETS WERE NOT NOW INTERESTED IN FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM BECAUSE A SOLUTION WOULD INEVITABLY CONTRIBUTE TO A BROADER DETENTE. RABIN ALSO EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF ISRAEL IF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES COULD FIND A SOLUTION TO THEIR PRESENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

2. ALLON HAD STRESSED ISRAEL'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE, SAYING THAT IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE WEST TO HAVE A COUNTRY LIKE ISRAEL IN THE AREA. FOR ONE THING, IT PREVENTED GREATER SOVIET INFLUENCE. ISRAEL HAD NO INTENTION OF ATTACHING ITSELF DIRECTLY TO NATO BUT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO NATO THAT ISRAEL EXISTED. ALLON BEGAN WITH A REVIEW OF THE 1967 WAR. CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 COPENH 00007 01 OF 02 021801Z

AFTER THAT WAR, HE STRESSED, THE ARABS DECIDED NOT TO ACCEPT PEACE TALKS. THIS WAS PARTLY DUE TO DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS OF RESOLUTION 242, WHICH THE ISRAELIS HAD ALWAYS MAINTAINED CALLED FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THIS LED TO WHAT ALLON STYLED THE "CRUEL" WAR OF 1973, WHICH HAD DEMONSTRATED ONCE AGAIN THAT THERE WAS NO MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. WHILE SAYING HE DID NOT UNDERESTIMATE ARAB MILITARY POWER, ALLON POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAD HAD QUITE IMPORTANT MILITARY ADVANTAGES AT THE BEGINNING

OF THE LAST WAR. TODAY ISRAEL'S MILITARY STRENGTH IS GREATER THAN IT WAS IN OCTOBER 1973 BUT THEY WANT DIPLOMACY TO BE GIVEN A CHANCE. THEY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED AN OVERALL SOLUTION BUT THEY HAVE ACCEPTED THE SECRETARY'S STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH. THEY WANT A SERIES OF BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ARABS BECAUSE THE PROBLEMS WITH EACH COUNTRY ARE DIFFERENT. ALLON SAID THAT THE ISRAELIS GET NO ADVANTAGE FROM THEIR WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS EXCEPT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE. RESOLUTION 338 WAS A GOOD ONE, BUT ISRAEL WAS NOT INTERESTED IN RE-OPENING THE GENEVA TALKS SINCE THEY WOULD PROBABLY LEAD MORE TO RHETORIC THAN TO POSITIVE RESULTS. IT WAS, HOWEVER, USEFUL TO PRESERVE THE GENERAL GENEVA FRAMEWORK FOR THE TIME IT MIGHT BE REQUIRED.

3. ALLON MAINTAINED THAT THE PLO DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL AND THEREFORE THE ISRAELIS COULD NOT ACCEPT THAT ORGANIZATION. ISRAEL SAYS "YES TO THE PALESTINIANS, NO TO ARAFAT." ALLON SAID THAT HE THOUGHT ARAFAT HAS MISSED A GOOD OPPORTUNITY BY NOT BEHAVING LIKE A STATESMAN IN NEW YORK. HE ALSO SAID THAT ISRAEL DID NOT WANT EGYPT TO BECOME TOO DEPENDENT ON THE PLO.

4. ALLON DID NOT GO INTO DETAILS ABOUT HIS DECEMBER TALKS WITH THE SECRETARY. HE DID, HOWEVER, STATE CERTAIN "PRINCIPLES" IN WHICH ISRAEL WAS INTERESTED. ISRAEL WANTED A TERRITORY OF ITS OWN WITH DEFENSIBLE BORDERS. THIS LATTER WAS IMPORTANT BECAUSE ANY WAR IN THE AREA WOULD BE FOUGHT WITH CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND THERE MUST BE AN AREA IN WHICH TO MANEUVER. ISRAEL DID NOT WANT ITS FRONTIERS TO INCLUDE A LARGE ARAB POPULATION. AS AN ASIDE, ALLON SAID THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD FOUND THAT THE PALESTINIANS IN THE OCCUPIED AREAS WERE THE MOST MODERATE, BUT THEY WERE ALSO THE ONES WHO HAD SUFFERED THE MOST FROM THE RABAT DECISIONS. HE POINTED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 COPENH 00007 01 OF 02 021801Z

OUT THAT THOSE DECISIONS HAD HINDERED JORDAN'S MANEUVERABILITY. ANOTHER ISRAELI PRINCIPLE WAS THAT THE ISRAELIS COULD NOT PERMIT JERUSALEM TO BE DIVIDED ("BERLIN MUST NOT BE REPEATED"). JERUSALEM MUST BE KEPT AS ONE CITY UNDER ISRAELI CONTROL BUT WITH SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VARIOUS RELIGIONS.

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PAGE 01 COPENH 00007 02 OF 02 021806Z

44

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AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 COPENHAGEN 0007

5. ISRAEL WANTED MILITARY EQUIPMENT BUT IT DID NOT WANT FOREIGN TROOPS IN ISRAEL. IT ALSO DID NOT WANT TO BE DEPENDENT ON OTHER COUNTRIES BUT TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THEM IN A PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT. (COMMENT: THE DANES WERE SOMEWHAT MYSTIFIED ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS LAST POINT, WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN AN ELLIPTICAL REFERENCE TO THE ISRAELI AVERSION TO AN IMPOSED PEACE.)

6. EUROPEAN PROBLEMS AND ISRAEL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE
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PAGE 02 COPENH 00007 02 OF 02 021806Z

AROSE IN SEVERAL CONTEXTS. RABIN AND GULDBERG FOUND THEMSELVES IN SOMEWHAT GLOOMY AGREEMENT ON THE DECLINE OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE WEST, A THEME GULDBERG HAD DWELT

UPON IN RECENT PRONOUNCEMENTS. THE ISRAELIS WERE CRITICAL OF FRANCE, PARTICULARLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE. THEY THOUGHT THE DIALOGUE COULD BE DANGEROUS FOR EUROPE. THE EUROPEANS HAD WANTED TALKS ON ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL PROBLEMS WHEREAS THE ARABS WERE ONLY INTERESTED IN THEIR POLITICAL EFFECT. ALLON ASSERTED THAT EUROPE HAS NO POLICY AND HENCH CANNOT PLAY A ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AT THIS TIME. HE WENT ON TO STRESS, HOWEVER, THAT "SOME OF THE ELEMENTS" IN EUROPE COULD BE OF IMPORTANCE IN REGARD TO THE MIDDLE EAST, WITHOUT MENTIONING WHAT THESE ELEMENTS MIGHT BE.

7. THE ISRAELIS SAW THE ENERGY QUESTION AS MORE A MATTER OF PRICE THAN OF RESOURCES. THEY SAID IT DID NOT HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO DO WITH THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT ALTHOUGH THEY DID CONCEDE THERE WAS SOME INTER-RELATIONSHIP. THEY FELT THAT OIL PRICES HAD BEEN TOO LOW FOR A LONG PERIOD.

8. FOR HIS PART, GULDBERG HAD BRIEFED THE ISRAELI LEADERS ON THE EC SUMMIT WHICH HE HAD JUST ATTENDED AND ON SOME OF THE QUESTIONS WITH WHICH THE EC WAS FACED. HE SET FORTH THE DANISH VIEWS ON ENERGY AND ON CURRENT ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. HE ALSO REFERRED TO HIS TALK WITH THE SECRETARY IN BRUSSELS JUST PRIOR TO HIS VISIT. HE HAD FOUND THE SECRETARY "NOT VERY OPTIMISTIC" ABOUT AN EARLY SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM. GULDBERG SAID HE WANTED THE ISRAELIS TO KNOW THAT THE DANES SUPPORT THE SECRETARY'S EFFORTS, WHICH THEY SEE AS THE ONLY POSSIBLE WAY A SOLUTION CAN NOW BE REACHED.

9. THE DANES HAD NO QUESTIONS TO RAISE AS FAR AS BILATERAL MATTERS WERE CONCERNED, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT THEY HOPED TO INTENSIFY THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE ISRAELIS HAD RAISED SEVERAL PROBLEMS, CHIEFLY ECONOMIC. THEY HAD COMPLAINED AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE EC AND ASKED FOR THE DANES' ASSISTANCE. (THIS CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF THE NEWS OF PROGRESS TOWARD THE NEW EC-ISRAEL COOPERATION AGREEMENT.) ISRAEL IS ONE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 COPENH 00007 02 OF 02 021806Z

OF THE FEW COUNTRIES WITH WHICH DENMARK HAS A TRADE SURPLUS. GULDBERG STRESSED THAT THE DANES WOULD LIKE TO IMPORT MORE FROM ISRAEL BUT THEY FIND THIS DIFFICULT IN VIEW OF THEIR FREE TRADE POLICY. THE ISRAELIS HAD SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS MORE FAVORABLE CREDIT TERMS MIGHT BE HELPFUL, AND GULDBERG PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THIS POSSIBILITY. THE ISRAELIS HAD THANKED THE DANES FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN THE UNESCO CRISIS AND SAID THAT THEY WANTED TO CONTINUE THEIR PRESENT CLOSE CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH DENMARK, TO WHICH THE DANES AGREED.

COMMENT: NO NEW GROUND SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN BROKEN IN THESE TALKS, NOR DID DANES EXPECT ANY TO BE. THEY WERE PLEASED WITH THE CORDIAL RECEPTION THEY RECEIVED AND SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT THE FRANKNESS WITH WHICH ISRAELI LEADERS EXPRESSED THEIR VIEWS. FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW, THE VISIT CAN CERTAINLY BE CONSIDERED "SUCCESSFUL" (TEL AVIV 7379). WHETHER THE DANES' EC PARTNERS, PARTICULARLY FRANCE, WILL SEE IT IN THE SAME LIGHT IS DOUBTFUL. WHILE DENMARK WILL ALWAYS TRY NOT TO GET INVOLVED OR TO TILT TOO FAR IN EITHER DIRECTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE ISRAELIS CAN TAKE COMFORT FROM THE FACT THAT, WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF THE JANUARY 9 ELECTION, THEIR RELATIONS WITH THIS COUNTRY ARE IN RELATIVELY GOOD CONDITION. CERTAINLY THEY HAVE MORE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FROM DENMARK THAN FROM ANY OTHER NORDIC COUNTRY AND MORE THAN FROM A NUMBER OF OTHER EC MEMBERS.

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